

BLOSSOM'S SECRET.

"I want you to choose, little Blossom"
 (Grandpa calls me his blossom, you know),
 "A gift for your birthday from grandpa.
 Shall it be the new calf, white as snow,
 The colt, or old speckled-wing's chickens?
 For of all that my acres can hold
 There's nothing too good for my darling
 Who is growing so dreadfully old."
 I thought, oh, a long time about it,
 Till my eyes wandered out to the trees,
 All loaded with pink and white blossoms
 That were falling like snow in a breeze.
 "You darling old grandpa!" I whispered,
 "Could you give me just one apple tree?"
 For I happened to think of a secret
 That belongs just to Daisy and me.
 The great golden apples are hanging
 Where the blossoms were hanging last May,
 We gathered the round shining beauties
 And sent them to town market-day.
 Of course I can't tell you the secret,
 For it doesn't belong just to me;
 I guess, though, the dear mission people
 Will be glad grandpa gave me the tree.—Selected.

ONE OF MAMMA'S PLANS.

NELLIE, come! Mamma's going to cut out cakes, and she says we may each have a piece of dough and make some for ourselves."

"Goody!" and Nell came down stairs two steps at a time. "Oh, mamma, you are so busy, let us cut them all; we've played doing it for years, and we are big girls now."

"Very well, and thank you," mamma answered, giving each little daughter a kiss; then, an idea coming into her mind, she added: "I will give you each half of the dough, and every tenth cake shall be mine; the rest you may do as you please with. Is that fair?"

"I should say so," shouted Daisy; but as Nell rolled up her sleeves to begin, she said soberly, "Mamma, it's a great deal more than fair. What do you mean? All the things are yours."

"But you are doing the work that turns the things into cakes. Besides, I gave them to you," answered mamma, beginning to stir up material for larger cakes.

"Yes, and you give us good food and home, and so we've got the strength to work with," said practical Nell.

"It's too little pay for so much give." "It isn't pay at all," mamma contradicted; "The tenth is mine; I never gave you that. If you want to pay me, you can give me some of yours."

"Mamma," began Daisy wonderingly, "I don't know what you mean."

"I do, I do," Nell answered vehemently, working away with vigor. "The tenth is the Lord's. Mamma wants to teach us something. He gives us everything but the tenth, gives us all the strength to work with,

and it's only after we've taken his part out that we begin to give. I see; I haven't been living with mamma fourteen years for nothing. I know she has meaning in her plans."

Mamma smiled lovingly. "Now, how will you work my plan. You know, you asked me yesterday what systematic and proportionate giving meant. Proportionate means taking one part or portion of the whole, such as one out of every ten or three out of every five, or any amount you decide on. Systematic means to do it by a plan regularly."

"I'll take out each tenth one as I cut it," Nell assented; but Daisy objected, "That'll take too much time; when I've done I'll count them all and divide by ten."

"Both ways are systems," said mamma, smiling. "Which one is best?"

"Mine," said Daisy. "It's less trouble."

"Mine," said Nell. "Then mamma won't have to wait so long for hers. We get ours right off, and 'tisn't fair for her to wait. Now," she added with satisfaction, "I've got something of my very own to give to that family our Mission Band is going to send a basket to at Christmas. It feels lots nicer."

"On the first day of the New Year," mamma said, "Papa and I have decided to give you each an allowance, out of which you are to buy your gloves, handkerchiefs and ribbons. Then, as we want you to learn to earn money too, Daisy shall do the dusting and Nellie may make the beds and straighten up the rooms for me in the morning, and we will pay you so much a week."

"Oh, thank you, mamma. Oh, mamma, you and papa do so much for us, we don't want any pay."

"Thank you, dear; but if you do it regularly and faithfully you will save me getting a girl to do it, who would do it altogether for pay. You can put love in 'o your service. Now, how about God's share?"

"Ten cents out of every dollar; that's the tenth, isn't it?" said Nell immediately. "That belongs to God." "S'pose our gloves and ribbons and handkerchiefs all wear out, and ninety cents won't buy new ones?" Daisy questioned.

"S'pose the dollar wouldn't buy them?" Nell asked.

"Then something would have to wait," Daisy answered laughingly.

"Then let it wait with ninety cents. If that ten cents is God's, 'tisn't yours; and if you spend all your ninety on yourself, what are you going to have to give away? I want to carry my own money to Band and Sunday-school, and have some to put away for foreign missions." Nell gave her rolling-pin a flourish. "Mend your gloves—mamma will teach you,—don't lose your handkerchiefs, and do without ribbons. I see how to have money to give; and I'm going to get a box and put 'The Lord's Tenth' on it, and put in His penny just as soon as I earn ten, and then it will be there, and I can't forget and spend it and have to owe Him money as well as thanks and love. I see the way to do, and I mean to begin right off. Here's mamma's painful of tenth cakes. Is the oven hot?"—[Selected.]